

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Diane Duscheck, director, 1998 Girls Nation Session; Barbara Kranig, national president, American Legion Auxiliary; ABC News anchor Ted Koppel; brothers Richard, Mark, and Jason Quinn, who died in a firebombing attack on their home in Ballymoney, Northern Ireland, on July 12; Judge Laurence H. Silberman of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia; and attorney David E. Kendall.

Memorandum on Public Availability of Tobacco Documents

July 17, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of Health and Human Services

Subject: Public Availability of Tobacco Documents

For decades, the tobacco industry sought to hide from the American people critically important information about the health hazards of tobacco and the industry's efforts to induce children to smoke. Recently, court cases and congressional subpoenas have forced the tobacco companies to make many of their documents public.

These documents confirm that for decades the tobacco companies did intensive research on the smoking habits of children, knew tobacco products were addictive and deadly, understood that a price increase would drive down the number of young people who smoke, and deliberately marketed their products to young people and minorities.

Because they provide new information about which types of advertising appeal to children, these documents can help public health experts design counter-advertising campaigns and other strategies to protect children. These documents also can assist scientists in understanding more about the addictive nature of nicotine, the health consequences of tobacco use, and the effects of certain tobacco product designs and ingredients. It is therefore critical to the fight against youth smoking that the Nation's scientists and public health experts carefully examine and analyze these documents.

Although many tobacco industry documents are now public, most are not readily accessible. While many public health leaders have found and highlighted important docu-

ments, there is no comprehensive public index to help researchers locate information contained in the documents. Only a small percentage of the documents are posted on the Internet and it is difficult to search through them in their current format.

The State of Minnesota is currently involved in litigation to obtain the public release of a computerized index (the so-called 4-A Index), created by the tobacco industry for use during litigation. The tobacco industry has fought to prevent the release of this index. It is the industry's road map to its own documents and could improve significantly the ability of public health experts, scientists, State and Federal officials, and the public to search through industry documents. The bipartisan comprehensive tobacco legislation recently considered in the Senate contained strong provisions for public disclosure of tobacco industry documents. While I will continue to fight to enact comprehensive tobacco legislation, I am determined to move forward to protect America's children from tobacco.

Therefore, I hereby direct you, working with the Attorney General, the States, public health professionals, librarians, and other concerned Americans, to report back to me in 90 days with a plan to make the tobacco industry documents more readily accessible to the public health community, the scientific community, the States, and the public at large. This plan should:

(1) Propose a method for coordinating review of the documents and making available an easily searchable index and/or digest of the reviewed documents.

(2) Propose a plan to disseminate widely the index and/or digest as well as the documents themselves, including expanded use of the Internet.

(3) Provide a strategy for coordinating a broad public and private review and analysis of the documents to gain critical public health information. Issues to be considered as part of this analysis include: nicotine addiction and pharmacology; biomedical research, including ingredient safety; product design; and youth marketing strategies.

To help ensure greater access to these documents, the Department of Justice plans to file an amicus brief in the trial court in support of the State of Minnesota's motion to unseal the industry-created 4-A index.

I remain committed to using every power of my office to protect children from the dangers of tobacco. Through these actions, we can use the industry's darkest secrets to save a new generation of children from this deadly habit.

William J. Clinton

Remarks on Arrival at Little Rock Air Force Base in Jacksonville, Arkansas

July 17, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you very much, General. First let me say I am delighted to be back home. I'm glad to be with your Congressman, Vic Snyder, and our Secretary of Transportation, Rodney Slater. They're doing a great job for you. Mr. Mayor, thank you for coming out to make me welcome, and thank all of you for coming out.

I want to spend most of my time just saying hello to people in the crowd, but let me just make a couple of points. First of all, I am so grateful to the people of Arkansas for all that you did to give me a chance to serve as President. And I hope you take a certain amount of personal pride in the role you played when you read every day the news of our country's progress.

I'm very grateful that I had a chance to serve in a time when, working together, we've got the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the first balanced budget in 29 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years, the lowest inflation rate in 32 years, and the highest homeownership in the history of America. I'm proud of that. You should be proud of that.

I'm also very, very proud of the work that America is doing, and the role that the people who serve at this base have in it, in advancing peace and freedom and prosperity and security around the world. And I know you have some folks overseas right now doing important missions—we thank them for that.

I also want to know that I consider the training mission of this base vital, and I'm very pleased with the Air Force report, which has been embraced by the Defense Department, to continue the important mission of the base here, and I will support that. I know

you will too. Thank you for what you do every day.

Now, let me say one of the things that the President cannot do anything about, at least in the short run, is the heat. [*Laughter*] So I think it's time to stop the speeches and start the greeting, so you can get out of here before anything too bad happens.

But I'm glad to be back. Thank you. Thank you for everything. God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. on the Little Rock Air Force Base flight line. In his remarks, he referred to Brig. Gen. Jack R. Holbein, USAF, Commander, 314th Airlift Wing; and Mayor Tommy Swaim of Jacksonville, AR. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

July 11

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton attended a concert at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts honoring the 200th anniversary of the Marine Corps Band.

July 13

In the afternoon, the President had a luncheon with Senator Thomas A. Daschle and Representative Richard A. Gephardt in the Oval Office Dining Room.

The President announced his intention to nominate Karl J. Sandstrom to serve as a Commissioner of the Federal Election Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Christopher W.S. Ross for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the State Department.